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Q In view of the increasing opposition to George Bush heading the CIA because of his leadership of the Republican Party in the past, is the President --

MR. NESSEN: I don't know that it is increasing opposition. I have heard of one Senator, a Democratic Senator, who is a candidate for President --

Q Have you heard of Mansfield and Church?

MR. NESSEN: All right, that is two Democratic Senators who are candidates for President.

Q Mike Mansfield.

MR. NESSEN: I didn't know Mike was opposed to Bush.

Q Is the President considering withdrawing Mr. Bush's name?

MR. NESSEN: Absolutely not. He stands by the nomination for the reasons that he has stated; that is, he is a man of intelligence and integrity. He has a record both as Ambassador to the United Nations and representative in China.

There have been a number of demands lately that the Director of the CIA be someone who is not a career intelligence officer, so that would certainly be in George Bush's favor. He is an outsider.

The President feels that his having gone before the voters and be elected twice to Congress gives him a responsiveness and sensitivity to the wishes of the public in the running of the CIA.

He has a high standard of morals and ethics which should serve him well in a period when the CIA is being reformed and revised. For all those reasons, plus the working relationship and the personal relationship, and the trust and the confidence the President has in him, he is the President's choice for that job.

Q Ron, the requirement is that this be a non-partisan position and he is conveniently ignoring one of his credentials; that is, former head of the Republican Party. Do you see that as a detriment to his nomination?

MR. NESSEN: I don't see that as a detriment to his nomination, and if there was a rule somewhere that a man who at one time or another served as leader of his party -- after all, parties and the two-party system are an important part of our system -- if service as head of your party disqualified you for further public service, I suppose Fred Harris would need to drop out of the Presidential race --

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Succession
D. I. [unclear]

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Q Ron, this is a very sensitive question.

MR. NESSEN: -- Henry Jackson would drop out of the Presidential race and presumably retire from the Senate. I don't know where the idea comes from. At one point Cordell Hull presumably would never have been the brilliant State Department official that he was, since he was at one time leader of his party.

There is nothing I know of, and frankly don't understand, except in terms of people seeking the nomination of their party and looking for headlines, that would cause this issue to be raised.

Q Ron, Mansfield believes there should be a stipulation in advance that Mr. Bush will not be the Republican nominee for Vice President for the nomination to proceed through the Senate.

MR. NESSEN: I think we went around this a lot the other day, Tom, and I don't have anything to add to it. The President was asked about it on Meet the Press Sunday.

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Q There have been inquiries into the intelligence operations of some former CIA men who were involved in some political espionage. In light of that, is it not possible that this position is slightly different than a diplomatic post, than any of the posts filled by the people that you named? This is the head of an espionage organization and should it not be isolated from politics?

MR. NESSEN: How is it not isolated from politics?

Q If Mr. Bush is left open to the very real possibility that he might be a candidate for subsequent political office.

MR. NESSEN: The most sensitive job in the Government is President. It involves espionage and so forth.

Q Oh. (Laughter)

MR. NESSEN: That is, foreign espionage.

Should a man who had been leader of his party be ruled out as President because it is a sensitive job and might bring politics to it? It is a nonsense question.

Q He is being asked to investigate an agency that has been politicized.

MR. NESSEN: I just simply don't understand the theory that George Bush automatically, unless he can prove himself innocent, is a man who lacks integrity and ethics. There is nothing in his career that would lead you to believe that.

Q There is a related question, Ron, which some of the Senators don't think is nonsense, which is that the CIA is being reorganized now and that somebody ought to at least pledge that they would be in the job for a year, even if they are going to run for subsequent office.

MR. NESSEN: I am sure the Senators will talk to George Bush about this at his confirmation hearing. There are no candidates for Vice President that I know of.

Q Where is your reform proposal on the CIA? I was trying to ask that earlier.

MR. NESSEN: It is not ready to go yet.

Q Do you have a time frame?

MR. NESSEN: I don't.

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MR. NESSEN: In any case, it was something that did not and would not normally turn up in an FBI check.

Q Let's try to pin that down.

MR. NESSEN: To pin it down, I think you are asking Ted's question, which was, was the President aware of it? The answer is no.

Q Therefore, it was not in the FBI report?

MR. NESSEN: That seems obvious.

Q Ron, how can you describe Church as a candidate and deny that Reagan is a candidate? Did you get any authorization from Church? I may have missed this, Ron, or is this just no comment?

Q Back to Howard's question about the United Nations. There is some precedence. Last year, for instance, the appropriations for UNESCO were reduced, I think, about \$19 million. Would the President support a similar move as a result of the Zionism resolution?

MR. NESSEN: I don't know. You say would he support a move? The President has asked for the amount of money which he feels is the appropriate amount to ask for as the United States' contribution to the UN.

Q But that was before the resolution.

Q Would he think it would be inappropriate to reduce that in any fashion as a result of the Zionism bill?

MR. NESSEN: I have not asked him that specific question.

Q Mr. Colby has said at times he and Secretary Kissinger had some differences of opinion over information turned over to the Congress on the CIA. Was this part of the tension that the President had in mind when he talked about the changes?

MR. NESSEN: No. As I heard the President's remarks on Meet the Press and as I have talked to him since, what he was saying was that there were tensions brought about by clashes of personality and not of policy. As he said in the news conference, he wanted a team that he was comfortable with.

Q Did he have any problem with the way Colby handled or dealt with committees, handled the investigation?

MR. NESSEN: I have not heard him say that.

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Q Back to the sensitivity of a former National Chairman as head of the CIA. It has been traditional that the FBI Director not have a political background. I believe the Congress recently passed a law in effect barring former National Chairmen from serving as Attorney General. Does the President --

MR. NESSEN: I would have to try to remember what that law said.

Q Does the President think --

MR. NESSEN: Ted, look, we have a difference of opinion. Clearly you think George Bush should not have the job and the President does. I don't know that I can resolve that for you.

Q Deakin didn't say that, and you don't know what I think.

MR. NESSEN: Let me hear the question.

Q The question is, does the President feel that it would be all right to name a partisan, former party chairman, as FBI Director, or Attorney General?

MR. NESSEN: The question has never come up as far as I know. He has nominated George Bush because he feels he is the best man for the job, for the reasons that I mentioned a moment ago.

Q Ron, what is the President's reaction to the New York State Republican Committee Chairman saying that they are backing off endorsement of President Ford going to the convention for the delegates?

MR. NESSEN: I will have to read carefully what they did. I am not clear on what they did.

Q Ron, it looks as though Secretary Morton could be cited for contempt of Congress unless he turns over these documents.

MR. NESSEN: Yes?

Q You are familiar with it. Does the President have a reaction to this situation? Will he stand by Secretary Morton?

MR. NESSEN: I think the White House feels that it would be most unfortunate to hold Secretary Morton in contempt because he is simply -- the White House believes -- fulfilling his legal obligation under the statute, which is Section 7 (c) of the Export Administration Act as passed by Congress. So the White House supports the decision of Secretary Morton and there is a legal opinion from the Attorney General which likewise supports it.

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